



AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) An image processing device comprising:

a dividing part which divides compressed image drawing instructions into a plurality of sets of compressed image drawing instructions without decompressing them in such a manner that each set of image drawing instructions can be processed without referring to any other set of image drawing instructions;

a distributing part which distributes the plurality of sets of image drawing instructions to a plurality of image production processing parts; and

said plurality of image production processing parts each of which generates drawing data for image drawing processing from the plurality of sets of image drawing instructions,

wherein the instruction dividing and distributing parts analyze whether or not the image drawing instructions transmitted from the host apparatus are those concerning an image object, and also, an area to be processed or a data amount of the image object is larger than a predetermined reference value, and, when the conditions are met, the compressed image drawing instructions are divided into a plurality of compressed image drawing instructions, and the divided image drawing instructions are distributed into the respective image production processing parts for processing the same, respectively, while, when the conditions are not met, the compressed image drawing instructions are not divided, and are transferred to the image production processing parts as they are.

2. (Original) The image processing device as claimed in claim 1, wherein image data corresponding to the given image drawing instructions to be processed here comprises

image data obtained through data compression such that the resulting image data comprises a plurality of data blocks and each data block can be decompressed without referring to any other data block.

3. (Original) The image processing device as claimed in claim 2, wherein said dividing part divides given image data by a border between data blocks.

4. (Original) The image processing device as claimed in claim 1, wherein image data corresponding to the given image drawing instructions comprises image data obtained through data compression by a fixed length compressing method.

5. (Currently amended) An image processing method comprising the steps of:

a) dividing compressed image drawing instructions into a plurality of sets of compressed image drawing instructions without decompressing them in such a manner that each set of image drawing instructions can be processed without referring to any other set of image drawing instructions; and

b) generating drawing data for image drawing processing from the plurality of sets of image drawing instructions,

wherein the dividing step and a distributing step analyze whether or not the image drawing instructions transmitted from the host apparatus are those concerning an image object, and also, an area to be processed or a data amount of the image object is larger than a predetermined reference value, and, when the conditions are met, the compressed image drawing instructions are divided into a plurality of compressed image drawing instructions, and the divided image drawing instructions are distributed into the respective image producing processing for processing the same,

respectively, while, when the conditions are not met, the compressed image drawing instructions are not divided, and are transferred to image producing processing as they are.

6. (Original) The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein image data corresponding to the given image drawing instructions to be processed comprises image data obtained through data compression such that the resulting image data comprises a plurality of data blocks and each data block can be decompressed without referring to any other data block.

7. (Original) The method as claimed in claim 6, wherein said step b) divides the given image data by a border between data blocks.

8. (Original) The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein image data corresponding to the given image drawing instructions comprises image data obtained through data compression by a fixed length compressing method.

9. (Currently amended) An image forming apparatus comprising:

a dividing part which divides compressed image drawing instructions into a plurality of sets of compressed image drawing instructions without decompressing them in such a manner that each set of image drawing instructions can be processed without referring to any other set of image drawing instructions;

a distributing part which distributes the plurality of sets of image drawing instructions to a plurality of image production processing parts;

said plurality of image production processing parts each of which generates drawing data for image drawing processing from a set of image drawing instructions; and

a drawing processing part which performs drawing processing according to the drawing data given by said plurality of image production processing parts, and thus forms an image,

wherein the instruction dividing and distributing parts analyze whether or not the image drawing instructions transmitted from the host apparatus are those concerning an image object, and also, an area to be processed or a data amount of the image object is larger than a predetermined reference value, and, when the conditions are met, the compressed image drawing instructions are divided into a plurality of compressed image drawing instructions, and the divided image drawing instructions are distributed into the respective image production processing parts for processing the same, respectively, while, when the conditions are not met, the compressed image drawing instructions are not divided, and are transferred to the image production processing parts as they are.